VARIGNY'S "FOURTEEN YEARS IN THE SANDWICH ISLANDS."

[CONTINUED.]

"It was urgent that we should provide for the re-organization of the Privy Council. The commission of members expired with the Sovereign who had signed them—not that the law rendered this obligatory, it is silent on the subject; but custom, stronger than law, demanded that at the death of a Sovereign all the holders of important offices should send their resignation to the new King, and receive from him a new commission in the event of his being retained in office. This course had been taken by the members of the Privy Council on the morrow the death of Kamehameha IV. The King consulted us as to the choice of new councillors, and the retention of old ones. Some eliminations were made, and the new selections made were from men of practical experience, whose ideas were in unison with our own.

"The members of the Privy Council receive no pay; the office is nevertheless, sought after. The King convokes the Council at the request of any of his Ministers whenever it is found necessary. Purely a consultative body, the Privy Council takes into consideration those questions as to which the King and the Cabinet desires its advice. According to the nature of the business, it is referred to a special committee of members, which presents its conclusions in a report, after which its functions cease. There are no permanent committees, and consequently no settled parties, no precedents to embarrass the judgment, or dictate a conclusion. The Cabinet, dealing with any ordinary question, or the Minister with matters which belong solely to his own department, is under no obligation to follow the advice of the Privy Council, which, being an irresponsible body, cannot impose its will upon a Minister who is responsible to the Assembly; but, up to the present time, such a question has never arisen. Ministers do not consult the Council except when a really doubtful question arises; in cases as to which they neither feel any hesitation, nor any desire to feel, as it were, the pulse of public opinion, they accept the responsibility of their own decisions.

[NOTE.—The above does not accurately describe the functions of the Privy Council in the present day, when its duties appear to be confined to giving decisions upon matters which have been relegated to them by statute, and the custom of the King's Ministers seeking their advice on difficult questions, if it ever existed, has long ago fallen into disuse.

"Real, serious responsibility, that is the motto of ministerial life in the Hawaiian Islands. No power without responsibility, no responsibility unaccompanied by power; that is the presiding principle on which the ministerial departments are organized. The right of control belongs solely to the Assembly, which exercises it severely and with minuteness. As soon as it meets, its first business, after having listened to the Royal Speech, is to choose its committees. Corresponding to each ministerial department one or more committees, clothed with full powers, are appointed. They examine the accounts, the correspondence, the appointments to all sorts of offices. They have access everywhere; no document of any kind can be refused to them. Towards the middle, sometimes only towards the close of the session they present their reports, blaming or approving, pointing out the reforms they deem desirable; ministers reply, and the Assembly votes to accept or reject, in part or in whole, the conclusions of the committee.

"The nominations to the Privy Council were well enough received. As I have just said, we had been careful to select particular individuals, enjoying the esteem of the public, but drawn chiefly from among the more devoted partisans of national independence. The European element was largely represented in the Council; Americans were there also, but in limited numbers, and the annexationists were carefully eliminated.

As soon as the appointments were made, the Council was convoked to consider a grave question. It was necessary to fill the place of Mr. Robertson on the Supreme Bench. Very desirous though the King was to retain in the Interior Department this minister, so active and well trained to the management of affairs, he did not disguise from himself the difficulties he would encounter in finding a successor to him in the Supreme Court, and at the same time satisfying the legitimate demands of the Chief Justice, the public, and the Cabinet.

[Here follows an account of the constitution of the Court and of its methods, which we omit.]

"The Chancellor of the Kingdom was, and still is (written in 1873) Hon. E. H. Allen—a distinguished legist and an able statesman, he commanded general esteem. Already somewhat advanced in life, and of delicate health, he needed active and comparatively young men as colleagues. Mr. Robertson was his right hand; he placed a well-merited confidence in him, and it was not without a lively sentiment of regret that he saw himself deprived of his aid. Among the candidates for the vacant place, none particularly suited him, and at his request the Cabinet had postponed from day to day a nomination which the growing multiplication of business rendered more and more urgent. The Chancellor insisted upon a strongly constituted Court, placed above all party considerations; without distinctly saying so he made it very clear that he deemed it indispensable that Mr. Robertson should return to his seat on the Bench, and that he thought we could much more easily replace him as Minister of the Interior than find a colleague for himself equal to the position. We therefore decided to bring the matter before the Privy Council, Mr. Robertson declaring his willingness to return to his seat as Judge if such were the will of the King and the advice of the Council.

"The arguements of the Chancellor prevailed; in fact, they were pretty nearly irrefutable. Mr. Robertson took up again his former functions, and Mr. Hopkins, whom I was about to replace in the Finance Department, received from the King the portfolio of the Interior. This choice was not a very happy one, and Mr. Hopkins was not able to maintain himself long in office."

Here we pause in our translation to remark that M. Varigny seems to have been prejudiced against Mr. Hopkins from the start. As will be seen hereafter, he depreciates his abilities, and accuses him of want of loyalty to his colleagues during the stormy time of the Convention, which shortly followed. Without offering any comment on the career of Mr. Hopkins as Minister under two Kings, it is only fair to say that Mr. Wyllie, whose opinion is far more worthy of attention than that of his protege, held a very different estimate of his colleague, put a very different interpretation on what M. Varigny looked upon as his defection at the time of the Convention, and spoke of him then and afterwards with interest and affection.

The formation of the Cabinet and the character of its policy being explained, we pass over for the present some twenty pages of the book, which, besides merely personal matters, contain information and reflections about the condition of the Kingdom, all more or less interesting, but not altogether relevant to the political contest, whose history, as told by Varigny, we desire to present. To this we therefore pass on.

"During the entire month of April Cabinet councils succeeded one another almost daily. The King positively refused to take the usual oath to the Constitution, and the work of revision, with which we had been occupying ourselves, had quickly led us to the decision that it was urgent to raise a public discussion, and to have recourse to the plan of calling a convention composed of representatives of the people, the Nobles and the King to modify by common accord the Constitution of 1852.

"Many methods of revision had been brought forward, but in spite of the inconveniences which would attend it, that of calling a special convention seemed to us to be the most loyal and the only one which could give to the three orders the guarantees that were necessary. It might have been argued that the Constitution having been in the first instance granted by one of his ancestors, could be modified by the actual sovereign; but there was a contract. The King had granted, the people and the Nobles had accepted, and from this mutual accord there flowed an obligation for the one and for the others to respect a common agreement. I thought, and my colleagues thought with me, that it would be well to take a step in advance, and not merely call the other two orders together to ratify arrangements made without their assistance, but to vote upon and discuss with full knowledge of the reasons for them the changes which had become indispensable. The King held to this opinion the more because the modifications which he proposed to initiate amounted to a total recasting of the original document, and though he desired to inaugurate his reign with a bold reform, he intended to remain liberal in the methods he employed and to associate his chiefs and his people in a discussion from which he expected happy results.

"We, nevertheless, did not deceive ourselves as to the anger which we were about to evoke from the Missionary party, but we had made up our minds to accept the conflict; on the 7th of May appeared the following proclamation, which had been prepared in Cabinet:

"We, Kamehameha V, by the grace of God, King of the Hawaiian Islands, to our well-behaved and loyal subjects, greeting:—

"WHEREAS, The experience of all constitutional governments proves that a constitution ought from time to time to be submitted to certain revisions, in order to adopt it to new conditions in the history of the people;

"And whereas certain sections of the Constitution of our Kingdom have not had the happy results for our nation that were expected from them, and others are needed for the well-being of everybody and for the maintenance of our dynasty.

"Therefore, moved by our affection for our subjects, we hereby inform them that we desire to concert with our Nobles and with the representatives of the people on the subject of the revision of the Constitution, as well as in regard to the measures which should be taken for the public weal and for the conduct of the Government.

"Therefore, we convoke the representatives of the people to meet us and our Nobles in convention in the Legislative Hall, at Honolulu, on Thursday, July 7th, at noon."

"Our Minister of the Interior is charged with the execution of the present decree."

[Not having the original proclamation at hand, we give a re-translation from the French.]

"This was followed by a proclamation by the Minister, convoking the electors for the purpose of electing delegates, the number of which for each district was to be the same as for the Legislature.

"The feeling aroused was profound; the American party believed or felt itself menaced. It put itself forward at once as the defender, at all hazards, of the constitution of 1852, which was, indeed, its natural part, and did not neglect any means of awakening the indignation of the electors and of urging them to nominate the declared opponents of any change in the charter granted by Kamehameha III. As these changes were not yet made known, this part of their campaign left much to be desired, they were fighting in the dark. On another point, they carried on the strife with no less ardor and more ability. Taking their stand firmly, as in a fortress, on the text of Section 80 of the Constitution, they affirmed that any alteration made in a manner different from that therein indicated was void at law, and unconstitutional in fact, and that the delegates of the people should only respectfully call the King's attention to the fact that the Constitution, had provided beforehand for the present case, and that bound by their oaths, they could not follow him on the road by which evil councillors were leading him.

The Opposition journals also announced a public meeting for the evening of the 19th May. This came off in one of the churches in Honolulu. There a series of resolutions was discussed and passed. The first of these ran as follows: 'We disapprove absolutely of the method of revising the Constitution proposed by the royal proclamation. We believe that the same end can be attained, if it is necessary, by conforming to the terms of the Constitution itself, and that any other mode of procedure is unjustifiable.' The last resolution declared as follows: 'We are loyal subjects of our King Kamehameha V. We believe in his affection for us, and in his desire to guarantee to us the rights which the Kings, his predecessors, have granted to us. We will continue to sustain and support him, but his Ministers have betrayed the confidence which he has reposed in them, and we respectfully request him to banish from his councils men who declare themselves to be the enemies of our civil and religious rights."

"These last words were intended to foster a serious inquietude which had been awakened in the minds of the natives. It had been sought, with a certain amount of success, to persuade them that the King, who was a partizan of the Anglican religion, desired to make it the State religion of the Kingdom. It is needless to say that he had no such desire. Had it been otherwise, I should have immediately retired from the Cabinet. None the less was this calumny ably chosen to alarm and rally to a common vote both Catholics and Protestants—that is to say, nearly the whole of the electors.

"The electoral campaign thus commenced in Honolulu was quickly carried into the country districts. Everywhere the same cry was sounded—everywhere the Ministry was denounced as suspected of religious partiality for the Anglican Church, as hostile to the liberties granted by Kamehameha III. The object which the opposition set before it was to overthrow the Cabinet, to seize again the power which its chiefs had for a time believed themselves assured of by the King's sympathies. They thought that they might yet work upon his personal feelings; but the ardor of the battle carried them away, and if at the beginning of the campaign they were sage enough, and clever enough, to direct their blows only at us, leaving the King out of the discussion, such a line of tactics necessitated too much moderation and clear-headedness; compromising allies drove them to more extreme party measures.

"In the terms of the proclamation, the Convention was to comprise the members of the House of Nobles, numbering fifteen, and delegates from the people to the number of representatives, which was twenty-seven. The King reserved to himself the right to preside at debates. In all the districts the most advanced of the opposition came forward as candidates, patronized and supported by the Protestant missionaries, some of whom did not disdain to descend themselves into the political arena, and solicit the suffrages of the people. In doing so they merely acted on their rights; but they went beyond them in affirming from the height of their pulpits a statement essentially false, and in making a pretext of the excess of zeal displayed by the Anglican Bishop to accuse the Government of a desire to establish a State religion.

The King thought it his duty to oppose a formal denial to these constantly-repeated allegations. Since his accession to the Throne, he had cherished a desire to visit the different islands of the Archipelago; the opportunity seemed to him a good one for putting his project into execution, and to re-assure his subjects as to the intentions which had been attributed to him. The Cabinet approved this idea, and on the 24th of May the King embarked on his yacht for the island of Kauai, accompanied by Mr. Wyllie, whose guest for a few days he had consented to be."

A clock at Brussels has been going for eight months, and has not required to be wound up since it was first set agoing. In fact, the sun does the winding of this timepiece. A shaft exposed to the sun causes an up-draught of air which sets a fan in motion. The fan actuates mechanism, which raises the weight of the clock until it reaches the top, and then puts a brake on the fan until the weight has gone down a little, when the fan is again liberated, and proceeds to act as before.

Emotional sanity has never yet caused a victim to put his hand in his pocket and pay an outlawed debt.

EN ROUTE FOR THE GILBERT ISLANDS.

(CONTINUED.)

Our Gilbert Islanders are seldom idle—when awake. They braid quantities of fine line out of their own hair, and make numbers of small hand-nets from fibres of new Manila rope. Some of the women are skilful with their needles, and make, and patch, and mend their clothing with much assiduity, but without any regard, in a double sense, to the fitness of things—for they will re-seat a pair of dark woolen pantaloons with a piece of turkey-red calico; make a new back for a calico shirt out of an old black silk neck handkerchief; or fit a fresh sleeve of canvass duck to a half-worn muslin gown. They all have combs—locked up in their boxes—and use slender wooden skewers a foot long, with which they whip out their hair after drenching it with salt water. Then, after a series of pokes and scratches with the same instrument, it is thrust through a hole in the lobe of one ear, and into the thick hair at the back of the head, and left there. They are now and then a little ailing, but the *Julia's* medicine chest is well-stocked, and the captain prompt and decisive with his doses. There is one particular remedy for derangements of the digestive system that is his pride. "It goes to the right spot every time," he says, "and there is nothing can beat it for checking any looseness in the bowels. Why, I tell you what it is, I once laid that identical bottle of medicine on its side in the medicine-chest, and a little leaked out and jammed that drawer so tight that I couldn't open it until I had loosened it with a little castor-oil."

Each pleasant night, and there are many such, the people chatter and sing until "eight bells." Their melodies are simple, consisting of a few—two, or at the most three—notes. A quartette will get together, and sitting close to each other, accompany their song with a rythmic swaying of the body from side to side, and a regular beating of their own and each other's hands. This they do with great regularity—and 'tis a pretty thing to see their swaying bodies, arms waiving and crossing, palm meeting palm on the right and left, or against those of their *vis-a-vis*, while their laughing eyes, brilliant white teeth, and long glossy hair flash, and glisten and shine as the plaintive melody rises and falls.

We sail on day after day over the brilliant blue waters of the supertropic Pacific, with nothing about us but the sparkling waves, and overhead the beautiful sky, in which circle slender, snowy tropic birds with long arrowy-tail feathers faintly flushed with pink. At last the captain points out to us a peculiar tinge of lighter greenish blue in the sky on the horizon ahead of us, and tells us that is due to the reflection on the clouds of the green waters of a coral island lagoon. Afterwards we find that under the ordinary circumstances of a lightly clouded summer sky, and abundance of sunlight, that peculiar reflection always indicates the near presence of a coral island.

The natives see us pointing and gazing, and in a moment the rigging is swarming with men, women, and children, each anxious to be the first to see the land. As I study their eager, expectant faces, and see even the laziest and most stolid of them roused to a show of interest, I recall the lines—

"Breathes there a man with soul so dead,
That never to himself hath said—
'This is my own, my native land.'"

When a loud cry from aloft of "baka! cap'n, baka! I see him *first*, baka! baka!! baka!!!" tells me that it is the reward of tobacco offered to the one who first sights the land, quite as much as it is any joy at beholding their native islands again that has excited them so.

In a short time there appears on the horizon a number of fixed points that multiply and heighten until they grow to be a long line of palms. No land is yet visible; nothing but palms, in dense groups, in long rows, or standing singly, all rising, as it were, out of the sea.

It may be that we were twelve or fourteen miles off from the island, when its locality was first indicated in the clouds, and at the distance of 8 or 9 miles the palms were visible.

At four miles off ten yellowline of